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History Readers of the Old North-West

TALES OF THE INDIANS OF THE PLAINS

G. M. DUNLOP, M.A.



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TALES OF THE INDIANS OF THE PLAINS

G. M. DUNLOP, M.A.

Provincial Normal School, Camrose, Alberta

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FOREWORD TO TEACHERS

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THERE has been a long-felt want for easy reading material for pupils in Grade V. To meet this need, particularly in History, a series of History Readers of the old North-West has been planned. The manuscripts for this series have been prepared by G. M. Dunlop, M.A., Camrose Normal School, who has combined a successful experience in Normal School teaching with considerable research in his subject. Before publication each manuscript has been placed in the hands of the Grade V pupils of the Camrose Practice School, and all changes necessary to bring the readers well within the reading ability of this grade have been made.

It is not intended that the readers replace teaching, but rather to supplement interesting and forceful classroom presentations. A supply of each title should be placed in the library to be read by the pupils in connection with the practical exercises and projects which are assigned as the work of the year progresses.

A large note-book in which the student may do the study and other exercises suggested in the readers will be found to guide and motivate seatwork, particularly in the rural school.

Interesting classroom presentations supplemented by reading and project work such as is contained in and suggested by the readers, will assure a useful and interesting year's work in this grade.

The author wishes to thank Miss J. McKinnon, Grade V room teacher of the Normal Practice School, Camrose, for the thorough testing of this material in her class, and also Miss McKinnon's pupils for the careful and appreciative reading which they have given these stories.

THE PUBLISHERS.

CHAPTER I

The Blackfeet Make Camp

• • •

The long line of horses and men halted at the brow of a steep hill. Ahead the scouts could be seen searching the river valley for danger. They signalled the tribe on. Then the procession advanced slowly downward to the flat bench of land on the banks of the Old Man river.

"Hai-yah!" cried the chief, stretching out his arms in command. "Here we camp."

The warriors who were in the lead galloped up. Each was wearing a gaily fringed shirt and long leggings of leather. Along the outer seam of the arms and legs were strips of quills of the porcupine dyed in bright colors. Their moccasins, too, were decorated with quills of different colors. They carried round painted shields of buffalo hide



A Blackfoot Warrior

over their arms, and long lances with sharp stone heads in their hands. Their bows and arrow cases of tough rawhide were carried over their shoulders. Their faces were painted, giving them a fierce warlike appearance. They gathered about their chief, shook their lances in the air with a shout, and dismounted.

Next came a long line of horses each drawing a travois. The travois was made of two long poplar poles which were joined and tied above the horse's shoulders. The other ends trailed upon the ground behind. About three feet from the end of the poles two crossbars about two feet apart were fastened to the poles. The space between was covered with buffalo hide. This made a seat for the squaws and children. It also could be used for carrying the skin tepee, food, clothes and other equipment from place to place.

The women who drove the travois wore loose dresses made of deer or buffalo skin. The dresses were bound about the waist with a belt of leather. The sleeves of the dress were usually separate and held in place by leather thongs across the shoulders. They could be left off when not needed. The dresses were beautifully decorated with colored beads, or dyed quills. Along the sleeves and about the neck fringes were often used. Their moccasins were also trimmed with colored quills. They carried their babies in cradles of buffalo hide, which hung down their backs.

One travois carried a squaw and her two children. The woman's name was Dawn Light. Her son, a strong, cheerful boy of eleven years, was named Lone Ranger. His sister, Bright Star, was a happy little girl of nine.

"Oh Mother!" cried the boy, "Are we ready to camp?"

"Yes, Lone Ranger. The chief has just given the signal. We will be in our own tepee very soon."

"I'm glad," said Bright Star. "I'm so tired and hungry."

Quickly the squaws and children unloaded the tepees and equipment. Soon a circle of lodges rose in the places

pointed out by the camp marshals. Then came the sound of steel on flint. Here and there could be seen the glow of fire within the tepees, and the slow smoke began to curl upward from the smoke holes. Water was brought in skin buckets. Soon the pleasant odor of roasting buffalo meat could be caught on the evening wind.

In the tepee Lone Ranger was watching his mother roast a hump of buffalo on a sharp stick over the fire. "When will father be home?" he asked.

"Very soon," was his mother's answer.

The skin door of the lodge was moved aside, and a tall handsome brave entered. "Well," he said, "How have my little ones behaved today?" He placed his saddle on the ground and leaned his lance and bow against the wall of the lodge. Then he threw himself down on the bed of buffalo robes.

"The meat is ready, Heavy Lance," said Dawn Light. She served them pieces of roasted buffalo meat in coarse



Moving Camp—The Travois

wooden dishes. Soon they were all busy with horn spoons and fingers at their evening meal.

At last Heavy Lance breathed a sigh of satisfaction. He filled the stone bowl of his pipe with a sweet-smelling dried weed and lit it at the fire. Lone Ranger stood up. He took his father's saddle and brought it over to the fire. It was shaped like our saddles of today, only there was no high horn in front, nor was there a broad support for the rider at the back. It was made of heavy buffalo hide stuffed with deer's hair. The stirrups were made of leather sewn on wooden frames and hung from the saddle by means of strips of leather.

"Father, when can I ride a horse with the warriors instead of sitting with mother and Bright Star on the travois?"

Heavy Lance looked up at his son. "You are getting to be as tall as a man. Next spring when we start out on the hunt I shall give you a horse. You are a lucky boy to have a horse, for many years ago the Indians had no horses."

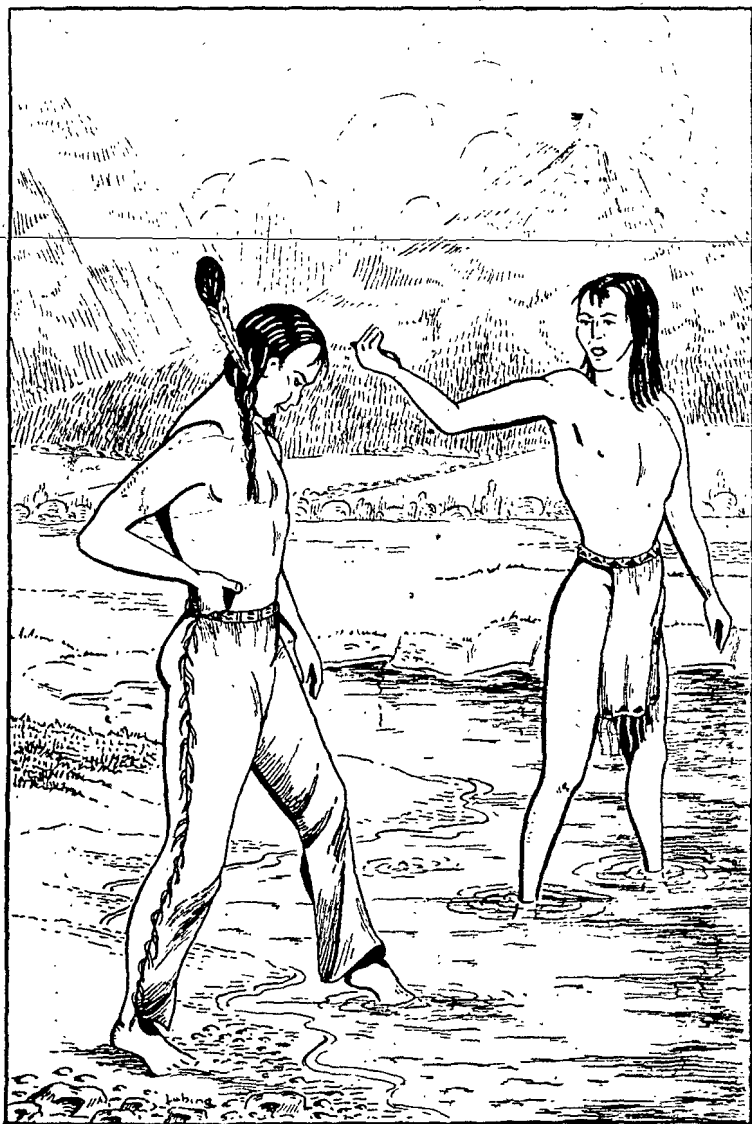
"How did the Blackfeet get their horses?" asked Bright Star.

"That is a very long story, but you and Lone Ranger should know it. I will tell you, and then we will all go to bed."

The Legend of the Coming of the First Horses

Long ago in the camp of our friends, the Piegans, there lived a poor boy named Long Arrow. His mother and father were dead, and he had no home. Because he was deaf people did not like him. He lived a lonely, unhappy life, dressed in rags and patches and eating the scraps of food thrown out of the lodges. Only one man, Heavy Runner, was kind to him.

One day Heavy Runner said to him: "Long Arrow, I am sorry for you. I have no son. I am going to take you into my lodge and treat you as my own son."



Long Arrow Enters the Water

From that day forward Long Arrow was a happy boy. He had better clothes. He grew strong and healthy. Best of all he began to hear better. He loved Heavy Runner for his kindness.

One day he said to Heavy Runner: "I would like to become a war chief of our tribe. How do you become a chief?"

"You can be made a chief in two ways. If you show yourself brave on the war path you will be made a war chief. In times of peace you must go to some far and dangerous place and do some brave deed."

Long Arrow never forgot. Years afterwards when he was a young warrior, he said to Heavy Runner, "I am going to a distant country to do some brave deed. We are at peace and there is no chance here to become a chief."

So one morning Long Arrow started south on foot. He travelled hard. After many days he came to a dark, gloomy lake near a range of snow-capped mountains. The water seemed almost black. You know that all the Bloods, Pie-gans and Blackfeet fear lakes. However, Long Arrow was so weary that he fell asleep on the shore.

When he wakened a handsome young Indian stood before him. "You are tired and have travelled far. Come with me. My father will make you welcome in our lodge," said the youth.

Long Arrow answered, "I will be glad to go to your father's lodge."

The young man turned and walked down the sandy shore towards the dark, forbidding lake. Long Arrow followed closely, though he shivered with fear of the dread Underwater People. He and all his tribe believed that these people lay in wait for persons passing by. They had been known to reach out and seize and draw under men who walked too close to the water. However, he was determined to show that he was brave.

To his surprise the young man stepped right into the water. He turned and smiled when he saw that Long

Arrow was close behind him. On they went. The water came up to their waists—then to their shoulders. The young man turned again to find Long Arrow still close behind him.

"You are a brave warrior, my friend. My father will be glad to meet you."

He walked on. The water deepened. Then a wonderful thing happened. The waters parted showing a path leading downward to a beautiful lodge at the bottom of the lake. They hurried down the path until they reached it.

"Come in. My father will make you welcome," said the youth, and parted the folds of leather of the tepee. Inside Long Arrow saw a great and noble chief seated with his legs wrapped closely in a robe of some black and shiny fur.

"You are welcome," said the chief. "No man has ever before been brave enough to follow my son down the dark path to the door of my lodge."



Dawn Light and Bright Star

Then they sat down to a pleasant meal of meat and berries. After they had eaten they smoked their pipes for a time. "Now my son will show you our herds," said the old chief, still keeping his legs closely wrapped in their black fur robe.

The two young men went out, and there in the pastures under the lake Long Arrow saw a herd of strange beasts. They looked like elk, but they were different. They had high, arched necks, flowing manes and tails. They were taller than a buffalo, yet far more beautiful and graceful.

"They are often called elk-dogs," said the young man, "but we call them horses. We ride them when we hunt, and they carry our tepee and food when we move."

He whistled sharply. One of the horses ran up. He leaped on its back and galloped back and forth.

"How I would like to take back a few horses to my people!" said Long Arrow. "They would be so much better than our dogs. We could hunt and travel so much more easily."

"You may have anything you want," was the answer. "We have more than we need. All you have to do is to tear the robe away from my father's legs and see his feet. Then he must give you anything you wish."

"I couldn't do that after his kindness to me," cried Long Arrow.

However, that night Long Arrow came into the lodge in a great hurry. Though he did not intend to do so, he caught the chief unready for his coming. The black robe was not about his legs. To his surprise he saw that they were not the legs of a man, but of a horse.

"I am so sorry that I blundered in," he exclaimed.

"Never mind, Long Arrow. It is not your fault," answered the chief. "You have learned my secret. Now I must give you anything you want before you leave my lodge."

"I want only to take a few horses back to my people,"

said Long Arrow. "They need them so much. But I don't want to take them if you need them."

"I have too many. You are welcome to them. Now listen carefully. Start north toward your home tonight, and travel for three days without looking back. Then, on the fourth morning you will see the horses coming toward you."

Long Arrow did as he was told, often doubting whether he would see the horses. On the morning of the fourth day he was awakened by the thunder of hooves, and thirty beautiful horses galloped up. Soon he was mounted on



Heavy Lance's Family

one of the best and was herding the others before him towards home. How happy he was!

One morning as the Piegan camp was just awakening, a loud cry was heard, and Long Arrow and his band of horses galloped into the circle of lodges. The warriors ran for their weapons in fear, but quickly saw that it was their friend Long Arrow. They crowded about him in wonder and admiration of the lovely horses. They could see at once the many uses to which they could be put.

Long Arrow called to Heavy Runner, "Do not be afraid. These beasts will help us when we move. They will carry us at great speed when we hunt. We need never be hungry again. For your kindness to me, Heavy Runner, you are to have one-half of my horses."

So Heavy Runner and Long Arrow became famous men in their tribe and very successful in the hunt. It was not long before Long Arrow was made a chief of his people.

* * *

"Oh how I would like to go on a journey and become a chief," cried Lone Ranger.

"When you are older, my son," said Dawn Light. "Now it is time we were all asleep."

The father agreed, and soon the lodge was silent save for the crackling of the fire, the scream of a night bird or the shrill cry of a coyote.

STUDY EXERCISES

1. Write the diary of Lone Ranger for the day which has just ended.
2. What difference did the coming of the horse make to the Indians in their mode of life?
3. Why did the Indians of the plains have movable tepees when a home in a fixed place would have been more comfortable?

THINGS TO DO

1. Make a model of a travois, using sticks, string and pasteboard.

2. Make a pasteboard figure of an Indian boy. Make paper clothes for him. Do the same with the figure of an Indian girl.
3. Draw an Indian saddle.

PROJECT

Start a class project—The Indian Camp. Use a large table at the back of the room, or a portion of the floor in one corner. Make a river (a sheet of glass or an old mirror will do as its surface). Make the banks and hills of earth or sand. Plant small twigs of spruce in it for trees. Leave a flat space for the camp. Place a hill in the background.

CHAPTER II

Morning in Camp

• • •

The sun was just above the eastern plains. The first thin fingers of smoke were rising from the smoke holes of the lodges in the still air. Everyone was up and at work, for dawn was the hour when the enemy sometimes attacked. The women carried wood and water to the tepees. The pleasant smell of roasting meat was in the air.

Men and boys came out of the lodges wrapped in buffalo robes. Heavy Lance appeared, followed by Lone Ranger. "Let us race to the water, father," said the boy.

The two rushed off toward the river. They arrived almost at the same time. Their blankets fell to the ground and in they plunged. They were soon glad to get out of the chill waters and hurry back to their lodge to dress.



Blackfoot Lodges

The morning bath was a daily custom among the Blackfeet. They thought that it kept them strong and healthy.

On their return breakfast was ready. They sat down to eat boiled meat and wild currants. After the meal Heavy Lance spoke: "Lone Ranger, will you run out to the herd and drive in my buffalo runner, Silver Mane?"

"Yes, father," was the eager answer. "What are you going to do? Will there be a hunt today?"

"I think so, my son. The scouts are out now."

"Fine! I love watching the hunt," and the boy ran off to do his father's bidding.

Heavy Lance busied himself with his bow and arrows. His bow string needed tightening. Some of his arrow heads were loose and needed to be rebound. Dawn Light and Bright Star were busy making the beds and tidying the lodge.

* * * *

The lodge was supported by sixteen or seventeen thin straight poles. At the bottom they were about fifteen feet apart, while at the top they leaned together. They were covered by buffalo skins which had been scraped free of hair, tanned and sewn together. The bottom of the skin covering was pegged to the earth. In earlier days it had been held down by a circle of stones. In the front of the tepee the two edges of the skin covering met. They were held together by wooden pegs about six inches long. At the top of the lodge a small opening was left out of which the smoke escaped. It was called the smoke hole. On each side of it was a flap of skin fastened to a pole. By moving the poles the flaps could be changed to suit the direction of the wind. In this way the smoke could always escape. The entrance to the lodge was oval in shape. Over it hung a skin door of the same shape, made of leather stretched on a wooden frame.

Toward the bottom the white leather of the lodge was covered with brightly painted patterns. Higher up were paintings of sacred animals and birds. In the picture you

will be able to see some of the decorations of the lodge. About the smoke hole the leather was blackened by the smoke of many fires.

Inside the lodge was quite comfortable. Sometimes a skin lining was attached to the inside of the poles to make the tepee warmer. Beds of buffalo robes were placed about the sides. In the centre was the fire enclosed by a small circle of stones. Over it roasted the buffalo meat which was turned on a sharp stick. When they wished to boil meat or eggs of the wild ducks a hole about a foot wide and six inches deep was dug in the ground. It was then lined with a buffalo's stomach, which was pegged to the ground on each side. This container was then filled with water. The meat was cut into small pieces and placed in the water. Then small stones were heated in the fire until almost red hot. One after another they were taken up in bone tongs and dropped in the kettle until the water was brought to the boil.



The Sweat Lodge

The water bucket was made of rawhide, or of the lining of a buffalo's stomach. To give it shape three hoops of wood were sewn around it. When placed on the ground the bucket spilled its water, so it was hung by a leather handle from a tripod of sticks.

Bowls and dishes were sometimes made from hollowed stone. More often they were carved out of a knot of wood, or burned out by means of red hot stones. Sometimes a horn was split in two. By fitting a wooden plug to one end a small dish was made. Spoons were made of wood and horn. Knives were made of chipped stone.

Bags and sacks were of parfleche or rawhide. To give them the proper shape the leather was stretched, while still wet, over a wooden frame of the desired size. After they had dried they kept their shape as long as they lasted. These bags were used for carrying food and clothing. Quivers for carrying arrows were made in this way. So also were the medicine rolls in which each man carried his sacred objects—his medicine pipe, some skin of a sacred animal, and his head dress. These bags were nicely painted and ornamented. Often they had a leather fringe.

* * * *

Soon the sound of hooves outside was heard. Lone Ranger came into the tepee. "I have staked Silver Mane outside, father. When will the hunt begin?"

"We have not heard yet whether there are many buffalo about, my son. All in good time. You might put some sticks on the fire, I see that it is getting low."

Lone Ranger obeyed quickly. Soon the fire was leaping and crackling cheerfully. The boy stood looking at the flames. "Father," he asked, "How did the Blackfeet make fire before the white man sold us steel?"

"Well, my son," began Heavy Lance, "Long ago our people made fire by placing the point of one stick in a hollow in another piece of wood, and then turning the pointed stick as quickly as possible. At last the point would become so

hot that it would break into flames. It was hard work and took a long time, so often we carried fire from place to place in fire horns."

"What is a fire horn?" asked Bright Star, who had stopped her work to hear her father's story.

"It was a buffalo horn in which was placed some damp, rotten wood. Before leaving camp in the morning a live coal from the fire was placed in the horn. Then the end was plugged with a piece of wood. The coal burned slowly all day. As we neared the camping place at night the fire bearers rode ahead and opened their horns. They placed what little fire was left on some dried grass and blew on it gently until it burst into flames. Then, after a good fire had been started, the squaws carried the burning sticks to their lodges to start the tepee fires."

"I would have liked to have been a fire bearer," said Lone Ranger.



Making Pemmican

"Of course, now that we buy steel from the whites, we can start a fire more quickly by striking sparks from flint into dried grass, and blowing them into a flame as your mother does. That is much less trouble."

"Oh, I wish the hunt would start," exclaimed Lone Ranger. "I want to watch the buffalo gallop into the chute."

"Don't be in such a hurry, my boy," answered Heavy Lance. "If the scouts do not find buffalo, the men of the Buffalo Bulls Society will meet and make medicine. When they dance and make their medicine there is always good hunting."

"Why, father? Why do the Bulls meet when the tribe wants good hunting?" asked little Bright Star.

"That is a long story, my child, but I will have time to tell it to you before the hunt starts."

The Legend of the Buffalo Bulls

Once, long ago, the Blackfeet were hungry. For many days no buffalo had been seen. The little children cried in the lodges. The hunters were thin and weak from many days in the saddle.

One day three maidens were down by the river getting water. The chief's daughter said, "Oh, how I hate to hear the little ones crying for food. I wish I could do something. I would do anything if only I could get meat for the children!"

Suddenly they heard a deep voice. It seemed to come from above their heads. "You say that you will do anything for meat. Would you marry me?"

They looked up. The cliff above them was lined with buffalo. An immense buffalo bull was looking down at the maiden. "If this herd of buffalo rushes over the cliff you will have all the meat you want. Then will you marry me?" went on the deep voice.

The maiden thought only of the little children weeping in the lodges. "Yes, I will marry you!" she exclaimed.



The Maiden Asks Aid of the Magpie

Then the buffalo bull snorted a command. The line of buffalo leaped forward. A flood of bodies plunged through the air to the rocks below. Many were killed. Others had their legs broken. Almost at once the hunters appeared. The whole tribe fell upon the dead and wounded buffalo. Soon every lodge was red with meat and the cries of the little children died away.

The chief soon missed his daughter. The two maidens who had been with her on the bank of the river, told him of what had happened. They looked everywhere, but they could not find her. Nor could they find the body of the great buffalo bull. He must have borne her away with him.

"I'll find her if it costs me my life!" declared her father. Taking his bow and arrows he set off in search of his lost daughter.

He travelled hard that afternoon. Towards evening he came to the brow of a hill. Before him he saw a deep round hollow. It was like a great bowl in the plain. In it were thousands of buffalo. In the very centre he saw the great black bull and his daughter.

He slipped from his horse. Too late! The herd had seen him. They bellowed with rage and rushed at him. Soon his body had been trampled to pieces and ground into the dust.

"Oh, my father, my father," wailed the maiden. "Will I never see him again?"

"We have killed him just as your people kill us, answered the buffalo. He was really sorry for the brave girl. "I will give you just one chance. If you can find a single piece of your father's body bring it to me. Then I will make your father stand before you, alive and well."

The girl called the sharp-eyed magpie to her. "Please, dear magpie, please find some part of my father's body for me."

The magpie flew to the place where her father had last been seen. It pecked here and there. After an hour of

searching it brought a hair of her father's head to her. At once the buffalo snorted. There before them stood her father, hale and hearty.

"Thank you! Oh, thank you!" cried the maiden, weeping.

"You may go home with your father," answered the buffalo. "I will not make you marry me. You promised because you wanted the little ones to have meat. You are a very brave woman." Then to the father the buffalo bull said, "Before you go I am going to teach you and your tribe a new dance."

Then, before them in the deep hollow, lit by the rays of the setting sun, they saw a wonderful thing. Fifty of the largest of the buffalo bulls formed a circle, their heads toward the centre. They started their dance. First they moved backward and forward with a slow step. They pawed the ground together. They shook their great heads



The Dance of the Buffalo Bulls

and bellowed. It sounded like far-away thunder. To the chief and his daughter it was a strange and fearful sight.

After the dance the buffalo bull came to them. "Dress your best young men in buffalo robes and horns," he commanded. "Teach them the dance of the buffalo bulls. It will bring the whole tribe good hunting."

That was the beginning of the Buffalo Bulls Society. To this day they dance the Buffalo Dance. It has always brought us good hunting. That is why they are going to dance it this afternoon.

STUDY EXERCISES

1. How would the skin lining of the lodge make it warmer in winter?
2. Why were the buckets unable to stand alone?
3. What gift did the Buffalo Bulls receive?
4. How would the flaps be adjusted to prevent the smoke being blown back into the lodge?

THINGS TO DO

1. Make a lodge of sticks and paper. Color with crayons.
2. Make models of bowls, dishes and knives from wood or plasticine.
3. Make a quiver of pasteboard.
4. Make a bucket of paper, with hoops of heavy grass and a tripod of sticks.
5. Draw an Indian tepee in your note book. Color it.
6. Draw an Indian in the costume of the Buffalo Bulls Society in your note book. Color it.

PROJECT

Place a circle of tepees in the space left for the camp. Color and ornament them. Make a horse of plasticine harnessed to a travois.

CHAPTER III

The Hunt

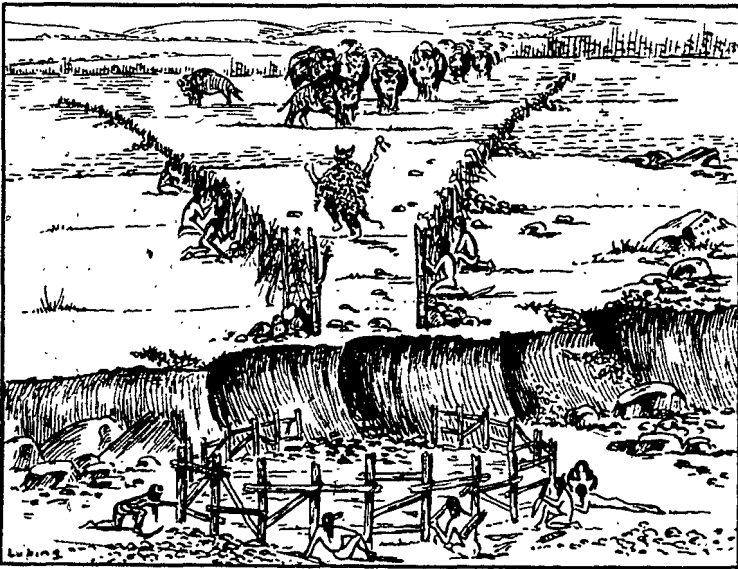
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"Hai-yah!" came a cry from outside the lodge. "The scouts have found the buffalo. Hunters, mount your best buffalo runners and follow."

At once Heavy Lance rushed out and threw the saddle on Silver Mane. When he had mounted he shouted, "Would you like to come along, Lone Ranger?" In a moment his son was seated before him.

Off they went with the other hunters. Soon they came to a hill. "Leave your horses here," came the command. "The scouts are leading the buffalo herd into the pis-kun. You will not need your horses."

The men dismounted and crawled with their bows and arrows to a low fence of rocks and posts, where they took



The Pis-kun

up their position. There they could see the whole sight of the buffalo herd being led into the pis-kun.

The pis-kun, or blood-kettle, as the Indians called it, was built when possible near a steep cliff. On the plain above were two fences which stretched out like the arms of the letter V as far as half a mile away from the top of the cliff. This was called the chute. Near the cliff the two fences came within fifty feet of meeting. The fences were made of rocks and brush and a few posts. They were very low out in the plain, but became higher and stronger as they neared the cliff. Below the cliff was a circular pound of heavy posts.

When the hunt was ready to start the Indians took their places behind the fences on the plain above, or around the pound fence below.

The medicine men had started early in the morning. Before leaving their lodges they had spent some time in prayer. They purified their tepees by burning sweet grass. Then, without food, they had started in search of the buffalo herd. They wore long buffalo robes and a head dress of buffalo horns. As they neared the herd they jumped about in a strange way. The buffalo stopped eating to look at them. The men moved away. The buffalo, interested in the strange figures, began to follow. The men moved towards the chute. The herd followed more quickly. As they neared the narrow end of the chute above the cliff the buffalo were running. Then the medicine men leaped over the fence at the side. At this point the Indians behind the fences and in the rear of the herd rose and began to shout and wave their arms. The run became a gallop as the herd crowded together and rushed on in fear. At last, reaching the narrow end of the chute, they plunged over the cliff, a river of living bodies, to crash into the pound below. Many were killed outright. Others had their legs broken. Those who lived were shot by the hunters who lined the fence of the pound. Soon all were dead.

Now the whole tribe came down to the pound. The

women and children started the work of saving the meat. The animals were skinned and the meat cut into small pieces and taken to the lodges. The skins were taken away for tanning. The horns were used for spoons and dishes. The great back muscles were dried for use as thread in sewing. The shoulder bones were made into skin scrapers. The hooves were used to make glue. The stomach was used in the making of kettles and pails. Even the tails were saved for swishing away flies in the fly season. When the sun sank the coyotes made a hearty meal of what remained. When morning dawned only the bones were to be seen.



Medicine Men

Lone Ranger and Bright Star and their mother and father were busy in the pound. First the buffalo were divided fairly between the different families. Soon Heavy Lance had the meat of four buffalo bodies ready to be carried back to camp. Then he and his family started for their lodge.

When they arrived Dawn Light began to make pemmican. First the meat was cut in thin slices. Afterwards it was placed in the sun to dry. When quite hard the slices were held on a pointed stick over the fire until roasted. When this was finished the hard slices were placed on a fresh buffalo skin. They were then pounded with a wooden mallet until the meat had been beaten into little pieces. The crumbs were placed in a trough of wood in which had been poured some warm buffalo-fat. To give flavor some wild berries or choke-cherries were added. When the mixture had been stirred thoroughly it was poured into small leather sacks. The bags of meat were pressed and stamped to drive out all air. More meat was then put in. Last of all enough warm buffalo fat was added to fill the sack. Then the opening was sewn up. The mixture had a pleasant flavor. It could be kept for years without spoiling. Pemmican was used by the warriors on the war path. It was also saved for the days of want when the buffalo herds could not be found.

The Indians who dwelt out on the level prairie used a different kind of pis-kun. Since no cliffs could be found the chute led over level ground into a corral. When the herd had been led into the corral, in the manner described above, the opening was closed. The beasts ran around the fence of the pound, but never tried to jump it. The Indians fired upon them with their bows and arrows until all were dead.

When there was no pis-kun near the herd, they used another method of hunting. They took a larger supply of arrows with them than usual, and mounted their best buffalo runners. When the herd was found the horsemen

advanced at full speed, firing their arrows only at close range. Their horses were trained to keep away from the dangerous horns of the poor beasts. There was always the danger of a horse stepping into a gopher or badger hole and throwing its rider. Often the Indians followed the herd for hours until their arrows were all used up. Then the plain over which they hunted was a strange picture. For miles it was dotted with the bodies of dead buffalo, with the women and children hard at work getting the skins and meat.

The antelope were found in great numbers on the plains. This little animal was much desired because of his tender meat and soft skin. In hunting them a small chute was made. They dug a pit at the narrow end and covered it with boughs and grass. The horsemen herded the antelope into the chute. In great fright the graceful animals rushed toward the narrow end to tumble into the pit. There they were killed and their meat and skins secured without trouble.

Their skins were used in making clothing. The women liked dresses made of antelope or red deer hide, as they were softer than buffalo skin. For winter use caps were made from fur taken from the head of the coyote or badger. These caps gave their wearers a strange appearance because the ears of the animal were left on. The Indians wore fur mittens also in the cold weather.

STUDY EXERCISES

1. Write a short story of not more than two pages in which you tell of a buffalo hunt as seen through the eyes of Lone Ranger.
2. Give as many arguments as you can in favor of being an Indian boy or girl on the plains long ago rather than being a pupil in school today.
3. In what different ways did the buffalo prove useful to the Indians?

THINGS TO DO

1. Draw a pis-kun on a sheet of cardboard. Make the chute and pound of plasticine. Have the chute part higher than the pound.

2. Draw a prairie pis-kun in use.
3. Draw an antelope chute.
4. Sketch a fur hat such as the Indians wore.

PROJECT

Make a skin rack of wood before one of the tepees. Have a skin stretched on it for tanning.

CHAPTER IV

Old Man

. . .

It was evening. The sun was setting behind the dark mountains to the west. Twilight stole over the prairie. The night birds uttered their lonely shrieks. The wind moaned and whistled about the smoke hole.

Within the lodge all was made warm and bright by a leaping wood fire. Heavy Lance had guests. A medicine man and another warrior were seated with him near the fire. Behind them sat Dawn Light and her two children. They listened to the talk of the men.

As the wind howled about the tepee the medicine man put down his pipe and said gravely, "It is the hour after sunset. It is now safe to speak of the gods.

"Yes," answered the warrior, "It is safe. Woe to him who names the gods in the light of the sun."



Tales of the Gods

Heavy Lance moved his pipe from between his lips. "Tell us about Old Man. My son and daughter have never heard the story."

The old medicine man placed his pipe beside him. He looked at the dark smoke hole above him. Then he told this story.

The Story of Creation

Old Man, or Na-pi, was the maker of man. Long, very long ago, he made the Rocky Mountains, which we call the Backbone-of-the-world. Then he made the prairie and rivers and streams. Afterwards he made man and woman. He gave us berries and wild turnips to eat. Then he made the animals so that we might eat meat. Sometimes Old Man did not act wisely. He made the antelope and placed it in the mountains. Its slim legs were not strong enough for leaping among the rocks. One of the antelope fell and broke one of its legs.

"Oh, ho!" he laughed. "I will change this. I will put you on the prairies. There you will not break your legs."

Old Man made the buffalo so that man could have meat. He made another mistake when he gave the buffalo its sharp, fierce horns. Soon, instead of man hunting the buffalo, the buffalo was hunting man. The buffaloes grew in number, and men became fewer.

"Ah, ha!" cried Na-pi. "This will never do!" So he took a long piece of wood from the ash tree. He peeled it carefully. Then he tied a bow string to both ends and drew them together slightly. The arrow he made from a smaller piece of wood. He chipped out an arrow head from a small piece of rock. To make it fly straight through the air he fastened three feathers to its shaft.

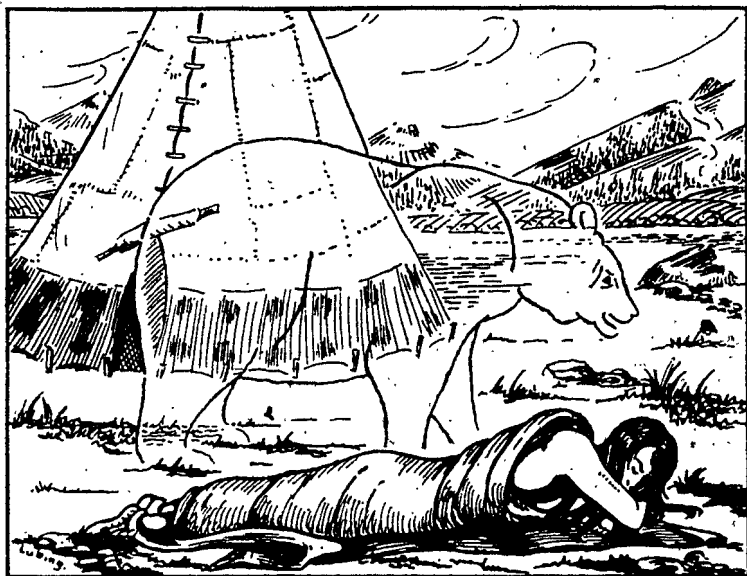
"Now we shall see who is the stronger," he said, "man or the buffalo."

Soon man was able to come out of his hiding place and hunt the buffalo. Since that time the buffalo has given us much of our meat.

Na-pi knew that he would not be with us always. One day he called the Blackfeet, the Bloods and the Piegiens to him. "When I am gone you will need help. Then, listen to me with great care. In that day go far away alone. Lie down and sleep. In your sleep some animal will appear. It may be a bear. It may be a wolf. It may be any other animal or bird. It will be your Helper. It will give you advice when you call upon it.

To this day, each young man tries to find out what animal is his Helper. As soon as he is old enough he goes to a far and lonely place. There he builds a small tepee. He rests there without food for four days and four nights. In his sleep may come his Animal Helper. From that time on the brave will pray to his Helper when he needs aid. Often a war chief orders his party to turn back on the war path. His Helper has advised him to do so.

Before Na-pi left he drew a line about the lands of the Blackfeet, the Bloods and the Piegiens. "Here you may



His Animal Helper

live and be happy. You have the animals, the birds and the fruits for food. You have the Black Winds (the Chinook winds) in winter to make you warm. Hold your land! If any other tribe crosses my line take your weapons and drive them out of your hunting grounds. As long as you keep this land for your own no harm can come to you. If you lose it no good will come. See that you hold your land!"

Old Man seemed to know that some day all would not be well for his children. His last promise was this: at some distant day we will have lost our lands. We will be hungry and poor. The buffalo will be gone from the prairies. Then, in our darkest hour, Na-pi will return. Then he will bring us back to our present proud position.

The lodge was silent. All seemed wrapped in thoughts of Old Man and his many kind deeds done for the Indians.

"Thank you," said Heavy Lance, "I never tire of hearing of the deeds of Old Man."

* * * *

The Indians also believed in the Ground People, who lived on the earth. They were seldom seen by man. One was the fierce Cold Maker, who fought against the sun. In the winter the Indians thought that Cold Maker was winning, for they saw the snow and ice, and felt the cold. However, spring saw the sun growing strong again. Then Cold Maker was forced to flee northwards.

They believed in the Above People, who lived in the sky. Chief of these was the Thunder. He was commonly believed to be a great bird. His voice was the thunder. Sometimes his fierce lightning struck and killed horse or man. He was prayed to because he brought the rains which made the green grass grow.

Last, were the Under Water People, who were feared by all. The Blackfeet were afraid to cross large rivers or lakes. They believed that these people were ever on the watch for careless Indians. When a man passed too close they would sometimes reach out and draw him under the

cold waves. The Blackfeet never used canoes, but crossed rivers and lakes on rafts. Before starting they threw food and gifts of clothes into the water to win a safe passage.

Chief among these peoples was Wind Maker. It was thought that he was a giant who caused the winds. As he tossed on his bed at the bottom of the lake his motions started waves on the water. The movement of the waves caused the winds to start blowing.

The Indians of the plains had different ideas of the future life. Every man was thought to have a soul. In life it was his shadow. When he died his shadow left him. The Blackfeet believed that the spirit of a good Indian



His Life Story

travelled to a far-off place called the Sand Hills. There it lived very much the same life as before death. It hunted the buffalo on a spirit horse. It ate meals of buffalo flesh and pemmican. It even went on the war path. But in one way it lived a much different life from that in this world. The spirits were only shadows. Everything they did was less enjoyable than it had been in life. The hunt was not so keen. They did not enjoy their meals. They were shadows living a shadowy life. So they did not look forward to going to the Sand Hills. The Crees believed that the life after death was more pleasant. They went to a Happy Hunting Ground where everyone was happy.

The man who lived a bad life met a worse end. He was not allowed to go to the Sand Hills. Instead, he lingered about the lodges of his former tribe. When the wind whistled about the smoke hole at night, the people in the tepee turned pale with fear. "It is some spirit come to trouble us!" they said.

Sometimes a brave alone on the prairie at night would hear the shrieks or wails of one of these spirits. He would tremble with fear for the spirit might breathe on him, causing illness or death, or even drive him mad. All he could do was to shake his lance and thunder out his war cry. Then the spirit might be frightened away without doing him harm.

* * * *

"Father," said Bright Star. "Tell us about Old Man's sliding places."

"Well, my daughter, Na-pi was once very lonely before he made man. He used to go to the Backbone-of-the-earth in winter. When he saw the white snow he wanted to slide. He would go to the top of a mountain and slide down. Where he slid the side of the mountain became smooth. We call these smooth sides of the mountain Na-pi's sliding places."



Crossing a Stream

STUDY EXERCISES

1. What aid did the Animal Helpers give man?
2. Write a short story of an Indian boy out at night and hearing the wind moaning over the prairie.
3. What were some of the mistakes of Na-pi?
4. Why were the Blackfeet always ready for war?

THINGS TO DO

Make a head dress for yourself. Use real or colored pasteboard feathers and a strip of cloth.

PROJECT

Collect a few pictures of animals found on the plains and place them about the room. Place some of the best head dresses about the room.

CHAPTER V

Natous, the Sun

• • •

"Get up quickly, my son. Today we must go to the sweat bath to pray to Natous, the sun." This was Heavy Lance's first greeting to his son one morning.

Lone Ranger rose quickly. He wrapped a robe about him for the morning was cold. Together they ran to the bank of the river. There they found a small lodge of buffalo robes hung over a frame of poplar boughs. It was about ten feet wide and six feet high, and was rounded on top.

The medicine man was seated at a fire nearby. In it he was heating a number of small rocks. "Enter quickly," he said. "We are almost ready to start."

They found the small lodge crowded with men and



The Sun God

boys. All were naked. In the centre was a round hole in the ground. The medicine man placed the heated stones in it. Then, standing in the centre of the lodge he started his prayer. "Oh, Natous, give us good hunting. Give us courage on the war path. Help us, oh sun." All moaned a response. The prayer went on. The medicine man asked Natous for many blessings. Then he poured some water on the hot stones. The steam rose about the naked warriors. Little by little the water was poured out. The tepee filled with steam, and the men and boys sweated at every pore.

At last, when Lone Ranger could hardly breathe, the flap was opened. The medicine man led the way to the river. In they plunged. Soon they climbed out, shivering but happy, and ran to their lodges.

The Blackfeet felt that the sweat bath made them better men in every way. It was thought that it cleaned them in mind and body.

"Who is the sun, father?" asked Lone Ranger, as he tried to get warm before the lodge fire. "I see him every day in the sky, but who is he?"

"Since Na-pi left us the sun is our best friend. He gives us light and heat. He makes the grass grow. He fights against Cold Maker and keeps us from freezing in the winter time."

"Is he a man, like Na-pi?"

"No, but he can take the form of a man. His lodge is the blue sky above. His wife lives in the moon. You can see her when the moon is full. His son is Early Riser, the morning star which you can see before the sun is up."

"Is he a warrior, father?" asked the boy.

"Yes, a great fighter. The Blackfeet watch him every morning and evening. If he rises or sets red as blood, the medicine men say "Beware!" The sun is painting his face. Beware of war!" We make gifts to the sun at the time of the Medicine Lodge every year. Sometimes we give clothes, sometimes the tongue of a buffalo. When a white buffalo is killed his skin is always given to the sun."

"Is there any way of getting to the sun's lodge?" questioned Lone Ranger.

"Yes, my boy. But only one living man has ever travelled that far trail. Let me tell you the story."

The Legend of Scarface

Once, many summers ago, a Piegan chief had a beautiful daughter. All the braves of the tribe wished to marry her. One after the other she refused their offers.

One day her father called her to him. "Why do you not marry one of these brave young men?" he asked.

"Alas!" was the answer, "The sun, himself, has told me that he loves me. I must wait until he calls me to him."

"It must be as the sun wills," answered the old chief, and no more was said.

In the tribe was a poor lad whose parents were dead. He was clothed in rags. Worse, he had a horrid scar on his face where a bear had clawed him. He had loved the beautiful maiden for a long time. He learned that all the other young men of the camp had asked her to marry them and had been refused.

He went to her. "You will not marry the other young men. There may be a chance for me. I have loved you for a long, long time. Will you not marry me in spite of my scar and my tattered clothes?"

The young girl bowed her head. "I would marry you today, but the sun, himself, has asked me to wait for him. If you could only get him to let me marry you, I should be full of happiness."

"What! Shall I travel to the lodge of the sun? No man on earth has ever found the trail that leads there. No matter! Though the road be far and dangerous, I will go."

"Be of good courage," she said, "for I will be waiting for your return."

So off the young man started. First he had to find the way. One by one he asked the animals for their help. They



Scarface and the Swans

did not know the path. At last he came to the wolverine. She said, "The way lies across a black water. I can only show you the road to that water."

After a time Scarface found himself on the shore of a dark lake, deep in the mountains. He feared that he could not get across, but up sailed two white swans. They asked him to lie across their backs. Then they swam across, carrying him. When they came to the other side of the lake they showed him a steep, rocky trail.

"Follow that path," they said, "It leads to the lodge of Natous."

Scarface set out up the stony way. It was hard work. He was far up the path when he saw that he had left the earth and was now midway up the sky. On and up he marched, footsore and weary. On each side of the road he saw beautiful clothing and strong bows and arrows. At last he met a handsome young man.

"Why did you not take some of the fine clothes and weapons which lay by the path?" asked the young man. "Your clothes are in patches and your bow seems old."

"I was afraid that they belonged to someone," was the answer.

"Well! An honest man! You are the first man I have seen on this trail. Where are you going?"

"I seek the far-off lodge of Natous."

"You are a brave man, indeed! Follow me. I am Early Riser, his son. I will show you the way."

Together they travelled to the sun's tepee. There the young Piegan begged the sun to give the maiden to him.

The sun laughed. "Certainly you may have the maiden. Give her these three feathers as a sign that she is free."

The young man gave his thanks. "Take also the best clothes and bow and arrows in the lodge," said Early Riser, "for you are an honest and brave man."

Then the sun's wife made him a gift. "I will remove that fearful scar from your face," she said. "Then you will be almost as handsome as my son, Early Riser."

Early Riser and Scarface then started downward towards the earth. This time they followed a shorter way. It was the Wolf Path, as the Indians called it, or the Milky Way. "Follow that white trail and soon you will be on the prairies," was the parting advice of the son of Natous.

Scarface pressed on alone. He was happier than he had ever been before in his life. Soon he was back in his own camp. The tribe crowded about him. They wondered at his beautiful clothes and bow and arrows. They wondered who he could be. When they heard his voice they knew it was Scarface, the poor boy of the tribe. Without the scar he was handsome.

The young maiden cried with joy when she saw the three feathers. "Now we can be married!" she exclaimed, and they were that very day.

To this day the Piegiens boast of Scarface. They are proud that a brave of their tribe has been the only man to travel the far path to the lodge of the great Natous.

STUDY EXERCISES

1. Why were the Piegiens so proud of Scarface?
2. Why did the Blackfeet use the sweat bath?
3. What other ways could the Indians have used to produce the steam for their sweat baths?

THINGS TO DO

1. Make a sweat lodge of paper and small twigs or heavy grasses.
2. Make a map showing the journey of Scarface.

PROJECT

Make a number of lodges, all of the same size, on transparent paper. Color them and paste one on each of the window panes. Color the side which can be seen from the outside, too.

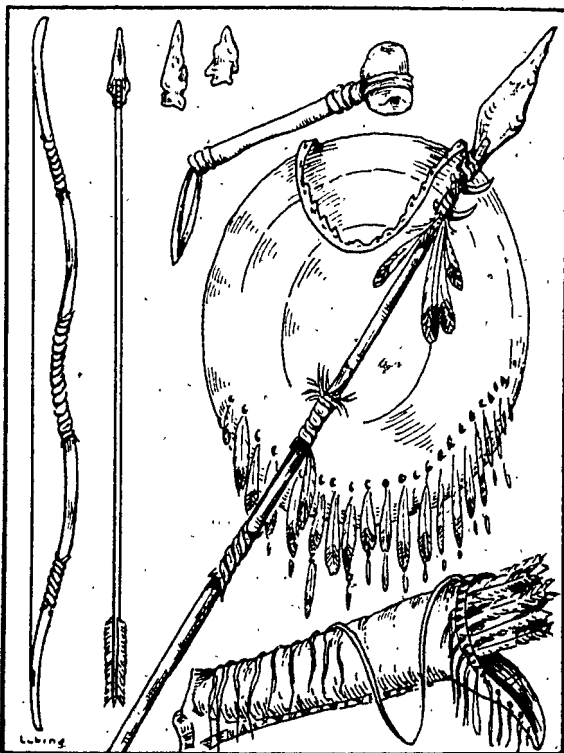
CHAPTER VI

The War Party Leaves

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Mid-day was near. The distant hills wavered in the haze. The women were busy tanning buffalo hides. The boys were shooting at a target with their bows. At last, tired of play, Lone Ranger came home to his lodge.

"Well, my son," said his father, who had just returned from a meeting of the All-Comrades Society, "What have you been doing today?"



Indian Weapons

"I have been playing that I was a brave on the war path."

"Ah!" exclaimed Heavy Lance. "Good! That is a game I want you to play. Tell me, Lone Ranger, what do you want to be when you grow up."

"A warrior like you," was the answer.

"But you know that warriors are sometimes killed in battle?"

"Yes, father, but I still want to be a warrior."

"Well spoken, my son. I am proud of you. Any man who is afraid to fight for his tribe is a woman. He should stay at home in the tepee. We Blackfeet once made a coward wear a woman's clothes. Ha! ha! He ran away because he was so ashamed."

"I shouldn't like to be treated like that, father."

"You are not a coward, my boy. You have seen the war dance. You know that only a warrior is liked by our people. Some day, Lone Ranger, you may become a great war chief."

What Heavy Lance said was true. All the Blackfeet, all the Indians of the plains, loved war. They felt that all men must be warriors. To die in battle was thought better than to grow old, sitting in the cold corner of the tepee.

The most useful weapon of the Indians was the bow. The Blackfeet made their bows from the ash tree, found along the Bow river. They glued sinew along the back of the bow to add to its strength. The middle of the bow was wrapped with sinew to give a better grip.

The arrows were made of the wood of the Saskatoon bush. Along the sides of the shaft they cut long grooves which they called lightning marks. It was thought that they caused the blood to run from a wound more easily. In this way the wound of an arrow would be more likely to cause an animal to bleed to death. The shafts were made straight and smooth by rubbing them against a block of wood on which had been placed glue mixed with sand. Three feathers were attached to the arrow to make it fly

straight. They made their arrow heads of chipped stone. Those used in war were not bound tightly to the shaft. This made it impossible to draw the arrow head from the wound. In hunting the arrow heads were fixed to the shaft. They could be pulled from a wound and used again. Each arrow had its owner's mark on it. After a hunt the arrows which were found could be returned to their owners. The Indians of the plains could shoot an arrow with great force. Sometimes an arrow was driven completely through a buffalo.

Their shields were made of the heaviest of buffalo skin stretched over a round frame of wood. The leather was treated again and again with coats of glue from the hooves of the buffalo. So tough were these shields that they could turn any arrow fired against them. They were painted in bright colors and worn on the left arm of the warrior.

The Indians also used lances or spears. The heads were



The War Dance

made of flat chipped stone, and were bound to a long wooden shaft. In the hands of a horseman the lance was a useful weapon.

Another weapon used on the plains was the maul or mace. It had a stone head, weighing about two pounds, which was made fast to a wooden handle by leather thongs. One traveller writes, "Every stroke which takes effect brings down a man or a horse." To prevent the mace from slipping out of the hand a strap was tied to the handle. When the mace was used this thong was slipped about the wrist of the warrior.

Each brave had a head dress of white eagle feathers with black tips. Before the coming of the horse the head dress had circled the head and reached partly down the back. After the horse came into use the head dress became longer. It could no longer be worn in battle but only in the war dance.

The camp was busy with the noon-day meal. Suddenly was heard the sound of a horse galloping wildly. It became louder. The warriors rushed from their tepees. An Indian threw himself off his foaming horse.

"The Crees!" he cried. "A strong party of Crees are in our territory. I must see the chief."

In a short time a war council had met in the lodge of Black Raven, chief of the tribe. The warriors were all invited. Outside the squaws and children waited, afraid of what was being decided. Lone Ranger waited with them.

"How I wish I were older," he said to one of his friends. "I would like to go on the war path too."

Soon the warriors were seen walking gravely to their lodges. "What are you going to do, father?" asked Lone Ranger.

"We are starting at nightfall. We will attack the Cree camp at dawn," was the answer. "There will be a sweat bath and a Wolf Dance this afternoon."

That afternoon the warriors gathered together. They sang a war song. Then they built a sweat lodge. The

medicine man prayed for the success of the war party as he poured the water on the hot stones. Then the braves cut little pieces of skin and flesh from their arms and legs as an offering to the sun. Now, dripping with perspiration, they plunged into the river.

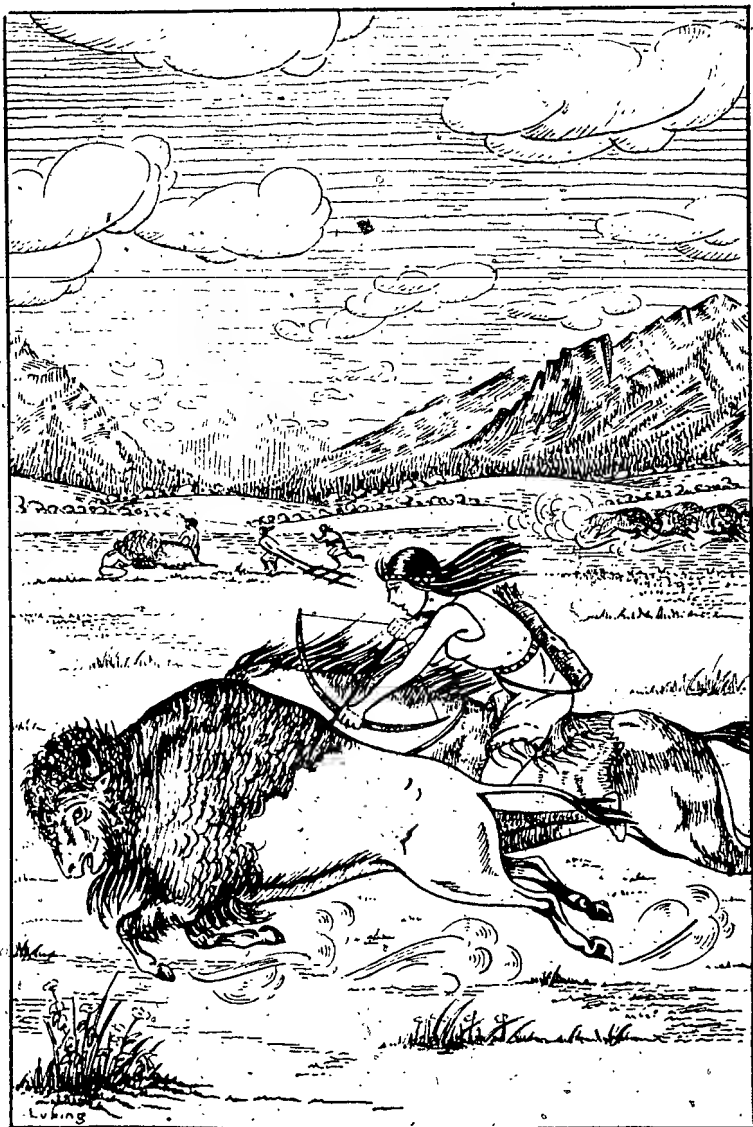
Later they gathered before the lodge of Chief Black Raven. Each was fierce in war paint, and wore his bravest clothing and his head dress. To the sound of the music of drums and whistles made of the wing bones of a goose they danced the Wolf Dance.

After they had danced for a time the chief rose and counted his "coups". A warrior may count "coup" when he steals a horse from the enemy, when he wounds or kills a foe, or when he does any other brave deed in battle. Afterwards another old warrior took the chief's place. He told of the times when he counted "coup" on the Crees. Each of the warriors in turn counted his "coups". The others listened carefully, shouting when the tale aroused their warlike feelings.

At last the war chief, Dark Spirit, rose. The warriors fell silent. In a deep, slow voice he began: "Braves of the Blackfeet, our Chief, Black Raven, has asked me to lead the war party. The Cree warriors will camp about twenty miles from here tonight. Our scouts are watching. We will attack at sunrise. Now go to your lodges for your weapons and food. Have your horses saddled and ready. The drums will call you when the time comes to start."

Back in Heavy Lance's tepee all was haste. Heavy Lance strung his bow again to make sure that it was ready for use. He looked at his arrows to see that the feathers and heads were firm. His lance was ready. Dawn Light packed a parfleche bag with pemmican. Lone Ranger placed the saddle on Silver Mane.

Ready at last, Heavy Lance puffed at his pipe. "If I do not come back, Lone Ranger, you must always remember that your father was a warrior. You must be a brave warrior, too."



Weasel Woman

"I will be brave, father," answered the boy, "but I hope you will be back soon. I know that you are going to chase the Crees out of our hunting grounds."

The drums began to beat wildly. Together they hurried out of the lodge. In the centre of the camp stood Dark Spirit with his arms raised. Near him were the two medicine men, clad in their gay clothes, with their feathers, rattles, and head dresses of animal horns.

"To horse, warriors of the Blackfeet!" came the command of the war chief. A hundred braves swung into their saddles and formed into a long line. Dark Spirit mounted and placed himself at their head. Then the medicine men prayed to Old Man who had told the Blackfeet to guard their hunting grounds. They prayed to Natous, the sun, for his aid. Then, amid a chorus of cries and shouts, the long line of warriors passed out of the camp into the gathering darkness.

"When will the war party be back, mother?" asked Bright Star.

Dawn Light shook her head. "That I do not know, my child."

"Oh, I wish I could be a warrior, mother," cried Bright Star.

"Oh, ho!" laughed Lone Ranger. "Women do not fight. They stay at home and make clothes and cook."

"Now, my son. Not so fast," said his mother. "Let me tell you the story of a woman who became a war chief of her tribe."

The Legend of Weasel Woman

Once there lived a young maiden called Weasel Woman. When she was fifteen years old her father and mother died of smallpox. She was left in charge of two younger brothers and two little sisters.

"You must marry a rich husband," the old women said. "He will care for your young brothers and sisters."

"No," answered the young girl, "I think I will try to keep our lodge myself for a while."

So she trained the young girls and boys to cook and sew and to tend the tepee. She hunted the buffalo and soon became a good shot with her bow and arrow. The boys were soon old enough to help her with the hunting. The girls were able to care for the lodge, cook, sew, and tan skins without her help. They were very happy, for they had all that they wanted.

After several years her sisters married. Her brothers, too, set up lodges of their own. Now Weasel Woman had no one to look after. Many young men asked her hand in marriage.

No," was her answer. "I have done a man's work for years. I am not ready to be a woman, and sit in the lodge while my man is on the war path."

She was always thinking of war. She trained herself to use all of the weapons which men used in fighting. One day a war party started out to attack a band of Flatheads who had been hunting buffalo. Weasel Woman followed, keeping well behind until they were close to the enemy. Then she rode into their camp one night.

"What! A woman with us on a war party!" they cried. "You must go home to the tribe." But it was too late. They were in the heart of the enemy's country. She would never be able to get home alone.

"Why not let me stay?" she asked. "I will fight shoulder to shoulder with the best of you."

Much against their will they had to give in to her wish. In the battle which followed she showed great skill and courage. She counted "coup" three times. She saved the war chief from death.

After the battle the medicine man declared, "Weasel Woman has brought us good fortune. She is brave and fights like a man. She must come with us on all our war parties."

When they returned the warriors allowed her to dance with them in their war dances. She also counted her

"coups" with the others. She, alone of all the women, was permitted to put on the sacred war paint. When other bands took the war path, they asked her to go along. To her they gave the name of Pi-ta-mak-an, the name of a brave old chief long ago in the Sand Hills. Soon she became a war chief and led war parties of her own.

Many chiefs of the Blackfeet, Blood and Piegan tribes wished to marry Weasel Woman. To them she gave the same answer, "No, I am a warrior, not a woman. I will live-and-die-a-warrior."

Her answer was only too true. On her ninth war party against the Flatheads she and five of her braves were killed. To this day, however, we remember her as the only woman to become a war chief among the Indians of the plains.

STUDY EXERCISES

1. How did the Indians teach their sons to look on war?
2. Why did the tribe know that they must fight when they heard of the Crees?
3. Explain clearly what was meant by counting "coup".

THINGS TO DO

1. Make bows and arrows out of willow or poplar wood. See pictures.
2. Make arrowheads of wood.
3. Make a lance head of wood and a separate shaft. Use string to bind the head on.
4. Make a shield out of pasteboard or paper on a wooden frame. Color it.

PROJECT

Decorate the walls of the classroom with shields, bows, arrows, lances, maces.

CHAPTER VII

The War Party Returns

. . .

All next day the camp awaited the return of the war party. The old men put on fierce war paint and strung their bows. The boys practiced shooting with their bows and arrows. The women waited in their lodges, praying for the safety of their men.

The second morning dawned cold and gray. "Mother," cried Lone Ranger, "Will they be home today?"

Dawn Light looked at him. The tears were running down her cheeks. "Oh! I hope so, my son." Then, as she returned to her work, "It is as the gods wish. We must wait and be brave."

The day wore on. Heavy clouds banked up in the west and the skies darkened. Suddenly there was a bright flash



The Return of the War Party

of lightning. The thunder rolled, shaking the thin lodges, and the rain began to fall. "Hah! The Thunder Bird is angry," the old men cried. "It is a bad sign!"

Evening drew near. Already the light was growing faint. Then one of the old men raised his voice in a shrill shout. "They come! Our braves are coming home." All rushed out into the cold rain.

Far across the prairie they could see a line of slowly moving horsemen. "What is the matter? Where are the others?" exclaimed the women as they counted the horses. "We sent out a hundred braves. Why, there are only fifty or sixty coming back."

They peered into the twilight. The line of warriors was moving very slowly. The men did not sit upright in their saddles, but leaned forward against the driving rain. They seemed weary and downcast.

At last the line entered the camp. At the head rode their leader, Dark Spirit. Not a word was spoken as the warriors rode up. Dark Spirit raised his hand to the dark skies. "We met the Crees at dawn yesterday. In the night another party had joined them. They were stronger than we were. Yet when we struck in the early light they fled before us. We followed hard. Only twenty escaped us. Over a hundred Crees fell. We have held the hunting grounds that Na-pi gave us so long ago!" Then his voice fell. "Over thirty of our best braves have gone on the long journey to the Sand Hills."

From the waiting women broke a long wail of sorrow. They had been looking among the returned men. Some saw their dear ones safe and sound. Others saw a husband or son wounded or bleeding. There were others, too, who could not see the ones they looked for. They were back there on the dark wet prairie. Their spirits had fled to the Sand Hills.

The warriors dismounted wearily. Their horses were taken away by the old men or the boys. Their wives and children rushed forward to them.

"There is father! There is father!" shouted Lone Ranger to his mother. He ran over to where Heavy Lance stood leaning against his horse. Then, seeing the blood stains on his shoulder, "You are wounded? Oh father!"

Heavy Lance greeted Dawn Light. Then he answered his son. "Yes, a Cree-put his lance head deep in my shoulder. It was his last blow." Then, wearily, "I must get to the tepee. I am tired."

When they were inside the warm lodge water was heated and the shoulder bathed. Sweet plants were banded over the wound. Then Heavy Lance sank back on the soft buffalo robes of his bed. "I am tired. I must sleep . . . Five times I counted 'coup' . . . and he fell into a deep slumber.

"Will he be all right?" asked Bright Star.

"Yes. We are fortunate," Dawn Light answered. "He will be well by the next moon."

The camp became quiet at last. Only in the lodges of those who had lost a husband or son was there light from the fire. Now and then a piercing wail told of a mother or wife who grieved over someone who had not come back from the war path.

* * * *

Morning dawned with blue sky and bright sunshine. The warriors who had no wounds plunged into the cold stream as usual. The smoke rose from the smoke holes. It was as if there had been no war party.

After the morning meal had been eaten two warriors of the All-Comrades Society went from lodge to lodge. "The Scalp Dance will start at Dark Spirit's tepee," they said.

Though his shoulder was painning him greatly, Heavy Lance rose. He put on his war paint. Then he dressed himself in his finest clothes. Lastly he put on his long head dress of eagle feathers. He did not carry his weapons because of his wound. In front of Dark Spirit's lodge were gathered the whole tribe. The two warriors of the All-Comrades Society gave a few orders. Then the Scalp

Dance started. First came the squaws who had lost their husbands in battle. They had blackened their faces with charred wood. Some had cut off their hair. Others had cut their arms and legs with sharp knives. They carried short wands on the ends of which were the scalps which had been taken in the battle. They marched along, weeping and wailing for their lost husbands. Then came the medicine men, dressed in all their fine robes. One wore a pair of buffalo horns on his head. In his hand he waved a rattle made of two small stones in a hollow buffalo hoof. Each carried his sacred medicine pipe. After them came the warriors of the tribe, each in full war paint and head dress. They wore their newest clothing of white skin gaily decorated with colored quills and fringes. Each carried his weapons. The old men came next. Last of all came the women and children.

They danced about the camp to the music of drum and



Dawn Light Cares for Heavy Lance's Wound

bone whistle. They sang their war songs. Then they went to their tepees.

That evening the warriors danced the war dance in Dark Spirit's large tepee. After they had circled the lodge again and again, and had sung their fiercest war songs, Dark Spirit rose. He told of the war party. "We left camp at sunset. All that night we travelled. Before Early Riser, the morning star could be seen, we were lying in wait around the Cree camp. We knew by the number of lodges that another party had joined them. We did not turn away. My Helper had told me to be of good heart. Just as the sun rose we swept down on them. Kai! How afraid they were! We struck down many before they reached their horses. They fled like camp dogs before us. All that day we followed them. We counted 'coup' many times. It was a great battle. We of the Blackfeet are brave warriors. I am proud of my braves. I have spoken!"

While he was speaking the other warriors listened carefully. As they remembered their part in the battle they shook their lances and shouted.

When Dark Spirit took his seat another warrior sprang to his feet. "When we attacked I saw a brave running toward the horses. I galloped after him. I counted 'coup' twice before they mounted. When we followed them I saw a chief ahead of me. I drew my bow. It was a long shot." The speaker had his bow drawn to show just how he had acted during the battle. "The arrow left the bow," he went on. "It passed through his arm. He fell from his horse. Kai! Again I counted 'coup!'"

By this time the braves were wildly excited. One after the other they rose and told of their brave deeds and the "coups" they had counted. At every tale of bravery the warriors shouted. And so the evening went on until all had told their stories and danced until they were weary. Then they returned to their lodges to dream of the war path.

STUDY EXERCISES

1. Describe the Scalp Dance.
2. Write the words of a brave warrior counting "coup" at the war dance.
3. Write a short play or dramatization based on the legend of Scar-face.

THINGS TO DO

Make the scenery and costumes for the best play written. Then ~~present the play on Friday afternoon.~~

PROJECT

Collect pictures of Indians. Mount them on colored paper and hang them about the room.

CHAPTER VIII

The All-Comrades Society

. . .

"Who are the All-Comrades, father?" asked the boy.

"They are the I-kun-uh-kah-tsi or the All-Comrades Society. Really they are a group of societies. I think I told you how one of the societies was formed. Before we fought the Crees I told you and Bright Star about the formation of the Buffalo Bulls Society, did I not?"

"Oh yes, I remember, father. That was about the great buffalo bull teaching our tribe his dance. He taught us how to have good hunting."

"Well," went on Heavy Lance, "That is how one of the All-Comrades Societies was formed. Now I will tell you about the other societies."

The All-Comrades Societies

We have twelve different societies in our tribe. I will give you the names of some of them. The young braves just starting on the war path are called the Pigeons. The Mosquitoes are the young men who have some experience in war. The Braves Society is made up of the best warriors in the tribe. The Raven Carriers, the Dogs and the Tails are societies of older men. The Soldiers and the Buffalo Bulls are societies of experienced warriors who have special duties about the camp and on the hunt.

The young men start in one of the lower societies. As they get older or win fame on the war path they can buy a place in a higher and better society.

When the tribe pitches camp there is an outer circle of lodges for the families. Then there is a small inner circle of tepees, one for each of the societies of the I-kun-uh-kah-tsi. The chief of the society lives in it. These lodges serve as meeting places of the members of the societies.

Each society has its own dances and secret meetings. They love war and strive to be great on the war path. Each has strict rules which make its members better men. Each group have a special dress which the members wear at their dances and secret meetings.

In our tribe the Braves are the police of the camp. Sometimes at night the young men make such a noise that the people cannot sleep. Sometimes some joker throws stones against the lodges. Often a group of boys push a young colt into a lodge. It runs about in fright, trampling on the sleepers. Once a young man gave the war cry in the middle of the night. Everyone feared that the enemy were about to attack and rushed to his weapons.

In each of these cases some members of the Braves Society are on guard. They rush to the place of trouble and seize the trouble-makers. Then they punish them as they see fit. Sometimes they knock down their lodges; often



Heavy Lance has a Feast

they take away their blankets; more often they take long sticks and beat them until they beg for mercy.

The All-Comrades Societies also have charge of justice. If a man kills another man, he may lose his life or pay the man's family a large amount in horses or goods. The family of the dead man must decide which is to be done. Thieves are ordered to return the stolen property. There is little stealing among our people. If a man is a coward in war he is not allowed to marry, and is sometimes forced to wear a woman's dress. If a man hunts the buffalo alone and drives away the herd, the penalty is more severe. He is whipped. His lodge is torn to pieces. Often much of his property is taken away from him.

"Now I know what the societies mean, father," said Lone Ranger. "I am going to be a member of your society, the Braves, when I am a man."

"Good, my boy. This evening I am going to have a feast in my tepee. I will invite some of the great warriors of our tribe. Your mother and Bright Star are getting the food ready now."

"May I stay in the lodge and listen to the men, father?"

"Yes, you may if you do not speak. You may learn much if you listen carefully. I am going to invite the guests now."

Heavy Lance went out of the lodge into the circle of tepees. This was the usual place for calling invitations to a feast. His voice rang out: "Heavy Lance will feast at an hour before sunset. He invites these good warriors to join him." He then called the names of ten men. No answer came from anyone. Yet that evening the men appeared at the proper time.

Silently they took their places in a circle inside the lodge. Each was served a dish of food. After they had finished eating, Heavy Lance filled a pipe. He puffed at it once, then offered it to the brave on his left. So it passed about the circle.

The guests talked about war and hunting. One brave told a story which seemed hard to believe. The guests fell silent. Heavy Lance looked at the story teller gravely. Then he took a pipe and handed it to the medicine man. The medicine man painted the pipe stem red. Then he handed it to the one who had told the story. All waited with sober faces.

"Smoke this pipe," said the medicine man. "If your story is true and straight as the hole in this pipe, you will suffer no harm. But if it is not, and you smoke it, you will die very soon."

The man took the pipe in his hands. "I have spoken truth. I know it is hard to believe. I will smoke." Then he put the stem in his mouth and puffed three times.

"Kai!" cried the warriors, nodding their heads. "He speaks the truth." They knew that no one would dare to smoke if his story was untrue.

The men talked for a time about the different bands of the All-Comrades Societies. Heavy Lance said to the medicine man, "We know the story of the beginning of the Buffalo Bulls Society. Can you tell us again the story of how the other societies were started?"

The medicine man bowed to him gravely. "I think I can tell you the true story of how the other societies had their start." All the guests stopped talking. They seemed eager to hear the story again.

How the Other Societies of the All-Comrades Started

One winter, long ago, it seemed as if the buffalo herds had left the plains. One old man said to his family: "Let us not wait here to die. Let us go to the mountains. There we may find deer or bear." So off they started. The Black Winds (Chinook winds) started blowing, and they were wet and cold as they rode westwards. That night as they sat, cold and hungry, a man came to their lodge. Though

the snow was wet, his moccasins were dry. Who could he be? Was he a god?

"What is your trouble, my friends," he asked. They told him of their search for food.

"Come with me to our pis-kun tomorrow. Our tribe have much meat. Now I will get you something to eat to-night." Soon he returned with a huge hump of buffalo meat. For the first time for many moons the old man and his family ate a good meal.

The next morning they moved their tepee over to the pis-kun. There they found meat in plenty. Here pemmican



The Raven Carriers

was being made. There the women were scraping and tanning skins. Feasts were held every day. How happy they were to be there after going hungry for so long!

That night a feast was held by the Raven band of the tribe. The old Indian was invited. When they had eaten, the Raven chief said, "I want to give our new friend a present. I am going to teach him the Raven medicine. The Raven has sharp eyes. It can see food far away. It never goes hungry. We belong to the society of the Raven-Carriers." He showed the stranger a stick with the skin head, wings and feet of a stuffed raven at the end of it. "I will teach you the Raven-Carrier's song and dance. Carry the raven and you will never lack food."

When the old man had thanked him, he said, "When you go back to your tribe call a council of your chiefs and warriors. Tell them that they have one society—the Buffalo Bulls. Tell them to choose some of their best men for the Raven-Carriers Society. Teach them the song and dance, and give them the stick with the raven on it. They will not go hungry again."

After the feast the old man went to his lodge. He told his family of the Raven-Carriers. Then he heard a voice calling the warriors to another feast. His name was called. This time he went to the lodge of the chief of the Bear band of the tribe. After they had eaten the chief gave him a necklace of bear's claws, a belt of bear fur, and a band of fur for his head. Then he showed the stranger the Bear's song and dance. "Teach your people this dance and song. Tell them to form a Bear Society. They will gain strength and wisdom."

At midnight another call to feast came. The stranger went to another lodge, where the men were painted with red streaks across their faces. Their hair was brushed to one side. After eating the chief said: "We are the Mut-siks or the Braves. We are great in battle. We fear no one. Better than the bow and the lance we love the knife on the war path." They taught him their dance and song

and gave him a knife with a scalp tied to the handle. "When you go back to your tribe have them start a Braves Society. Teach them our song and dance. Your Braves will be your best warriors."

Other feasts and other gifts came until dawn. The next day the stranger awoke to find that camp, pis-kun and tribe were gone. No trace of them was left. It was as if they had never been there!

After some days the old Indian and his family reached his own tribe. He called a meeting of the chiefs. To them he told his wonderful tale. Then the chief picked out some of his best warriors. To each the old man taught the proper songs and dances. That is how the societies of the I-kun-uh-kah-tsi were started in our tribe. Since then we have been strong and happy. All our best men are members of one or other of the societies.

* * * *

The guests sat in silence. They had enjoyed the wonderful story of the beginnings of the All-Comrades Societies.

Suddenly Heavy Lance rose. "Kai!" he cried. The guests stood up. One by one they slipped out of the lodge and returned to their own tepees.

"Oh, father!" said Lone Ranger. "A beautiful story. Some day I, too, will be a member of one of these wonderful societies. Some day even I may do great deeds!"

Heavy Lance led his son to the door of the lodge. The sun had set in a clear sky. The moon was beginning to shed her white light on the far-off snow-capped mountains. "Remember what I have taught you, my son. Remember the promise of Na-pi, the great kindness of Natous, the giver of heat and light. Remember the laws of our people, and the good work of the All-Comrades Societies. Then, I am sure, you will become a great chief of our tribe some day."

STUDY EXERCISES

1. How did the Indians detect a liar?
2. List some of the common offences about a camp.
3. What were the punishments given in each case?
4. What value were the various societies to the Indians?

THINGS TO DO

Make a plan of a Blackfoot camp showing the position of the ordinary lodges and those of the societies.

PROJECT

In your camp place an inner circle of tepees ornamented with pictures showing the society to which they belong. Make a border for the top of the blackboard of buffalo, or Indians, as the teacher may suggest.